

THE KING'S DAUGHTER

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

REBECCA PALFREY UTTER.



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THE

KING'S DAUGHTER,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

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BY

REBECCA PALFREY UTTER.



"The King's Daughter is all glorious within."

BOSTON:
J. STILMAN SMITH & COMPANY.
1888.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
King's Daughter	1
M. B. F.	3
April's Trick	4
Return unto thy Rest	6
Easter Song	7
The Wake-Robin	8
The Seed	10
Three O'clock in the Morning	12
The Swordless Army	14
Autumn Festival	18
Where Earth and Heaven meet	19
Nothing but Leaves	20
Christmas Hymn	22
A False Alarm	23
The Rain-Song	24
The Last Good By	26
Little Sweet Pea	28
White underneath	30
Motherhood	32
Spring Song	34
In my Castle	36
Robin	38
Dwellers in Tents	40
In the Moonlight	41
Four Valentines	42
When my Ship comes in	46
Ordination Hymn	48
Dedication Hymn	49
Walking on the Water	50
Old Prob's Dilemma	51
The Conspiracy of the Weather-Cocks	54
Margaret Germaine	59

THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

SHE wears no jewel upon hand or brow;
No badge by which she may be known of men.
But though she walk in plain attire now,
She is a daughter of the King; and when
Her Father calls her at his throne to wait,
She will be clothed as doth befit her state.

Her Father sent her in his land to dwell,
Giving to her a work that must be done.
And since the King loves all his people well,
Therefore, she, too, cares for them every one.
Thus when she stoops to lift from want or sin,
The brighter shines her royalty therein.

She walks erect through dangers manifold,
While many sink and fail on either hand.
She dreads not summer's heat nor winter's cold,
For both are subject to the King's command.
She need not be afraid of anything,
Because she is a daughter of the King.

Even when the angel comes that men call Death,
And name with terror, it appalls not her.
She turns to look at him, with quickened breath,
Thinking, "It is the royal messenger."
Her heart rejoices that her Father calls
Her back to live within the palace walls.

For though the land she dwells in is most fair,
Set round with streams, like pictures in its frame,
Yet often in her heart deep longings are
For "that imperial palace whence she came."
Not perfect quite seems any earthly thing,
Because she is a daughter of the King.

M. B. F.

DECEMBER 16, 1883.

In the house of the Lord forever
Her spirit dwelt secure.
Here was her cool retreat
From the burden and the heat;
Her refuge safe and sure.

The rain fell and the floods came
With rude roar and shock.
The winds beat and blew:
But she trembled not. She knew
Her house stood on a rock.

At last there came the messenger
Who speaks once, and no more.
No fear looked from her eyes;
Ready at once to rise
And pass through the open door

Into another mansion
Of the same Father's house.
O mother, faithful and true!
Dear Father, grant us, too,
A refuge in thy house.

APRIL'S TRICK.

When April still was young,
And full of her tricks and wiles,
Sometimes frowning and sad,
Again all grace and smiles,
One day young April said,
"I will feign that I am dead.

"The Sun and the Wind will mourn;
For they love me well, I know.
I will hear what they say of me
In my drapery of snow."
So silently, in the night,
She clothed herself in white.

The Sun rose up in the morn
And looked from east to west,
And April lay still and cold.
Then he called the Wind from his rest.
"Sigh and lament," he said,
"Sweet April, the child, is dead.

"She that was always fair,
Behold how white she lies!
Cover the golden hair,
Close down the beaming eyes.
One last time let us kiss thee;
Dear April, we shall miss thee."

The Sun touched his lips to her cheek,
And the color returned in a glow;
The Wind laid his hand on her hair,
And it glistened under the snow,
As laughing aloud in glee
Sweet April shook herself free.

RETURN UNTO THY REST.

He watches o'er his lilies pale;
He sees his sparrows when they fall;
Seed-time and harvest never fail:
The wild winds answer to his call;
All things obey his high behest:
Return, my soul, unto thy rest.

The life that his own hand has given,
Shall he not keep it to the end?
Through every step of earth and heaven
He will uphold thee and befriend.
Trust him; thy doubts and fears control:
Return unto thy rest, my soul.

Whether through pastures green and sweet
Thy pathway wind in pleasant ways,
Whether he guide thy tired feet
Slowly through dark and troubled days,
He surely leads thee to thy best:
Return, my soul, unto thy rest.

There is no death; there is no loss.
He holds thy treasure safe for thee
In other mansions of his house.
A little while, and thou shalt see
He will restore thee more than all:
Return unto thy rest, my soul.

EASTER SONG.

The winter snows have slipped away
'Neath April skies of blue and gray;
The flowers are waking day by day,
And sweet bird voices seem to say,
"Spring is here."

The brooks run forth her steps to meet;
Their voices soft her coming greet;
And grasses haste beneath her feet
To spread a carpet, green and sweet.
Spring is here.

And in their joy we too have part;
Let clouds of sorrow now depart,
Let hope and joy like blossoms start.
God whispers to each tearful heart,
Spring is here.

THE WAKE-ROBIN.

When leaves green and hardy
From sleep have just uncurled,
(Spring is so tardy
In this part of the world),
There comes a white flower forth,
Opens its eyes,
Looks at the waking earth
In drowsy surprise.

A fair and pleasant vision
The nodding blossoms make;
And the flower's name and mission
Is "Wake, Robin, wake!"
But you're late, my lady,
You have not earned your name;
Robin's up and ready
Long before you came.

You trusted the sun's glances
To rouse you from your naps:
Or the brook, that near you dances
At spring's approach, perhaps.

Your chamber was too shady
The drooping boughs among;
Robin's up already;
Don't you hear his song?

There he sits, swinging,
In his brown and scarlet cloak,
His notes like laughter ringing,
Be sure he sees the joke.
"Accidents will happen,"
Laughs Robin loud and clear;
"If you think to catch me napping,
Wake earlier next year."

THE SEED.

When in the dark imprisoning ground
The seed lies waiting for its hour,
Within a narrow cell fast bound,
Yet conscious of an inward power,
I know that it must cherish there
Dim longings for the upper air;
Dreams of a life more free and fair,
Foregleams of leaf and flower.

And when at last the word goes forth,
And its frail covering falls apart,
And rising upward from the earth
A new life thrills through every part,
The great sun greets it with a smile;
And the warm air of spring the while
Its unexpanded leaves beguile
From out their buds to start.

Over its head, a sheltering tent,
The blue sky bends by night and day;
While at its feet, in sweet content,
The brook goes singing on its way.

And lifting up its head it sees
The lofty, over-arching trees,
And feels itself akin to these
With joyful ecstasy.

How like a dream must seem the strife
And longing of its stay below!
How brief the struggle of that life,
Its days of waiting, long and slow!
How strange and sweet the sudden bliss
That the dark way could lead to this!
I think I now can dimly guess;
But one day I shall know!

THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

WHAT do the robins whisper about
From their homes in the elms and birches?
I've tried to puzzle the mystery out,
But still the answer is wrapped in doubt
In spite of my deep researches.

When all the world is in silence deep
In the twilight of early dawning,
They begin to chirp, and twitter, and peep,
As if they were talking in their sleep,
At three o'clock in the morning.

Perhaps the little ones stir, and complain
That it's time to be up and doing;
And the mother sings them a drowsy strain
To coax them back to their dreams again,
Though distant cocks are crowing.

Or do they tell secrets, that should not be heard
By mortals listening and prying?

Perhaps we might learn from some whispered
word
The best way to bring up a little bird,
And teach it the art of flying.

It may be they speak of one autumn day
When, with many a feathered roamer,
Under a sky too cold and gray,
Over the hills they took their way,
In search of the vanished summer.

And sometimes they gossip, from nest to nest,
Hidden and leaf-enfolded;
For do we not often hear it confessed,
When a long-kept secret at last is guessed,
That "a little bird has told it"?

Perhaps — but the question is all in doubt,
They give me no hint, no warning.
Listen, and tell me if you find out,
What do the robins whisper about
At three o'clock in the morning?

THE SWORDLESS ARMY.

A FABLE old there is (or might have been),
Of a fair land laid waste by civil strife;
Where seeming friends were deadly foes within,
Neither did any prize his neighbor's life
If he by spilling it more wealth might win.
At every belt was hung the ready knife.

So evil grew the times as years went by,
That hardly any man dared stir abroad
For fear some watchful hidden enemy
Might in his absence seize his little hoard.
Each looked on each with a suspicious eye,
Guarding the place wherein his wealth was stored.

Then, when it seemed that things no worse could be,
There rose a man, upright, and pure of heart,
Whose eyes alone were clear and strong to see
The misery men had chosen for their part;
How bright and fair were faith and charity,
How black their craftiness and evil art.

He spoke to them in words of counsel wise;
He told them all their bitter, sad mistake.
Some listened with indifference and surprise,
Not caring much their own ways to forsake.
Some felt a hope within their hearts arise,
Yet dared not be the first new steps to take.

But earnestly he urged them, and implored,
Till they consented to appoint a day
When every man should throw aside his sword,
And cast his feuds and jealousies away,
And meet with outstretched hand and friendly word
His neighbor, to keep joyful holiday.

But so it was, that every man, as he
Made ready, in his inmost heart had said,
"What if some traitor in the midst should be?
Must I stand helpless while he strikes me dead?
I know the men that make this company."
And in his garment's fold a knife he laid.

The hour came; each sought the appointed place,
And all seemed smooth and pleasant to the view;

For there were careful smiles on every face,
And words that had a friendly sound and true;
Till, as two neighbors met in close embrace,
Sudden and fierce a tumult rose and grew.

For each had felt beneath the other's gown
The hidden weapon; and in jealous fear
Quick from its hiding-place leaped forth his own,
As both together cried, "A traitor's here!"
And in a moment every sword was drawn,
And cries of "Traitor!" sounded far and near.

Then, for they all were cowards, each one ran,
Fighting, the shelter of his home to gain,
Until alone there lay one dying man,
Pierced with a hundred wounds, upon the plain,
Where, for the fair fulfilment of his plan,
Hopeful, and all unarmed, he watched in vain.

But one who hurried by with sword in hand
Paused to look down upon him where he lay
Lifeless; and thought, "Of all our treacherous band
The only honest heart has bled to-day;
The one pure light in this benighted land
Is darkened." And he cast his sword away.

And knelt to lift him. And another passed,
And seeing them, turned back to lend his aid,
And both forgot their bitterness at last
In common love and sorrow for the dead:
Recalling his good deeds, and blameless past,
And earnest, loving words that he had said.

And so the thought of that pure life henceforth
Possessed their hearts, that nought else could they do
But speak of it to all men. Little worth
Seemed now the gold they once had loved to view.
And with such power their earnest words went forth
That every day their number spread and grew.

And did that influence strengthen and increase
Till all men joined at last the peaceful band?
Did violence and envy wholly cease,
So that no weapon was in any hand
Through endless years of happiness and peace,
The Swordless Army filling all the land?

I cannot tell. Some think that this might be,
Others have said men never could forget,
Wholly, their selfishness and rivalry,
Nor rise above temptations that beset
Them everywhere. But one day we shall see.
I think the story is not finished yet.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL HYMN.

(FOR AUTUMN FESTIVAL.)

Our Heavenly Father looks with love
Upon this world of ours,
And sends his rain and sunshine down
To make it bright with flowers.

Through spring and summer days they fall
On orchard and on field,
Till rosy fruit and golden grain
In rich supplies they yield.

And so when falls our Father's love
Upon these hearts of ours,
Kind words and noble deeds should grow,
Like lovely fruits and flowers.

WHERE EARTH AND HEAVEN MEET.



Whether between lie meadows green,
Where sun and shadow play,
Or silent snowfields intervene
With trees of leafless gray,
Or stately hills send down supplies
To blue lakes at their feet,
Beyond them all I seek the line
Where earth and heaven meet.

Sometimes remote it seems, and dim,
Through earthly mists that rise;
Again distinct and clear it stands
Before my longing eyes.
O faces loved I may not see,
O lips I may not greet,
Till life's horizon line I reach
Where earth and heaven meet.

NOTHING BUT LEAVES.

THERE stood a young plant in a garden fair,
Where the spring sunshine was most fair and bright.
The moist earth nourished it; the breathing air
Took from its folded leaves a fragrance rare,
And coming summer seemed one long delight.

It felt the beauty of all outward things;
Rejoiced in sun and breeze with grateful heart.
Yet thought, "My greatest joy the summer brings,
When from green buds unsheathing their bright wings
The clustered blossom from my stem shall start."

It knew not that its worth and beauty lay
In the sweet perfume of its growing leaf;
And when the gardener, passing by one day,
Cut from its stem the buds, and went his way,
Its heart within it heavy grew with grief.

Then, with all patience lifting up its head,
Its mission it fulfilled unconsciously.
Once more abroad its drooping branches spread;
For "Though I may not blossom," so it said,
"At least my leaves shall green and perfect be."

Daily and nightly from that still retreat
Its fragrance widened through the summer air;
And the good gardener thought no wreath complete
Until a spray of leaves so wondrous sweet
Was twined among the flowers, however fair.

'Twas loved and sought and prized the country through.
And one among whose bridal flowers it lay
The stem from out the fading roses drew,
Planted, and cared for it, until it grew
A living memory of her wedding-day.

And sometimes hearts oppressed with loss and grief
A sudden comfort from its presence drew.
It seemed a message sent to them; as if
There came a whisper from each rustling leaf,
"Shall he not, therefore, much more care for you?"

At last, when all the flowers had closed their eyes,
To its long rest it lay down thankfully,
Thinking, "Another summer will arise;
Perhaps beneath its soft and sunny skies
The flower of my life I yet shall see."

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

In another land and clime,
Long ago and far away,
Was a little baby born
On the first glad Christmas Day.

Words of truth and deeds of love
Filled his life from day to day,
So that all the world was blessed
On that first glad Christmas Day.

Little children did he love
With a tender love alway:
So should little children be
Always glad on Christmas Day.

A FALSE ALARM.

A BIRD from the far blue sky
Came down to a tree-top high,
And sang so merry and loud one day
He had seen Spring coming up this way.

A little brook heard it, and ran
As fast as a little brook can,
And told the ferns in the hollow there
To take the curl-papers out of their hair.
He spoke to the violets, too,
To put on their gowns of blue.
The snow-drops and crocuses heard it all,
And did not wait for a second call.

But they need not have made such haste;
There was time to use and to waste.
They dressed themselves in their best array,
And then they waited a week and a day.

THE RAIN-SONG.

When woods were still and smoky,
And roads with dust were white,
And daily the red sun came up
With never a cloud in sight,
And the hillside brook had hardly strength
To journey down to the plain,
A welcome sound it was to hear, —
The robins' song of rain.

"Lily, Fuchsia, Pansy,"
The robins sang in the town,
To thirsty garden flowers that stood
With delicate heads bowed down.
"Listen, we bring you a message:
Your doubts and fears are vain;
For he who knoweth all your needs
To-morrow will send you rain.

"Golden-rod, Aster, Gentian,"
They sang in field and wood,
"We whose homes are near to the sky
Have brought you tidings good.

Lift up your heads, and listen;
Forget your thirst and pain;
For he who knoweth all your needs
To-morrow will send you rain."

Far and wide they sang it,
Till grove and garden knew.
The green trees stirred at the joyful word,
Till the sunset clouds looked through.
Each told the news to his neighbor,
Each neighbor passed it along,
Till the loneliest flower in the silent wood
Had heard of the robins' song.

Dear little feathered prophets,
Your message was not vain;
For in the stillness of the night
Came the footsteps of the rain.

THE LAST GOOD BY.

We have said our last good by:
Once for all the word is spoken;
Yet the strong and sacred tie
Is not changed, beloved, nor broken.
Ever near I feel thee here.
We have said our last good by.

When on earth we say good by,
Sad our hearts, not knowing whether
Pain and grief will pass us by
Till again we come together.
Wild winds sweep, and seas are deep,
And with tears we say good by.

Now, beyond all wreck and storm
Thou art safe, beloved, forever;
Life has new and glorious form
Where peace floweth as a river.
Surely, glad, and not sad
It should be, — the last good by.

We have said our last good by;
Not, beloved, our last glad greeting.
How my heart beats quick and high,
Thinking, sometimes, of the meeting
When we stand in the land
Where no more they say good by.

What and where that land may be
I can only dream; but whether
Far or near, I know that we
Always there may dwell together.
Sad, yet sweet, the words repeat, —
We have said our last good by.

LITTLE SWEET PEA.

Of all the flowers that summer brings,
Little Sweet Pea, with unfolded wings,
And delicate fragrance that from them springs,
Is sweetest and best to me.

Her sober brown seeds in the ground I place,
Then watch for the sight of her rosy face
And slender tendrils, with clinging grace, —
A pleasant sight to see.

Little Sweet Pea is brave and bold;
Early she lifts her head from the mould;
And though the winds are searching and cold
Never a fear has she.

Though April laughs and cries like a child,
And even May can be rude and wild,
She knows that June will be friendly and kind;
So she toils on patiently.

Her neighbors all are at her command,
Glad to offer a helping hand.
"You are young," they whisper, "alone to stand;
Lean upon me" — "and me."

She clasps their fingers upon her way,
And so climbs upward day by day,
Till June, with a steady, comforting ray,
Cheers the heart of Sweet Pea.

And makes it so glad, and happy, and light,
That she breaks into blossoms fragrant and bright,
Like rosy butterflies ready for flight, —
A joy to all who see.

Constant and true is Sweet Pea, and though
Early to come, she is late to go;
She stays till the clouds are heavy with snow,
And all alone is she.

She shivers with cold in the autumn gale;
Her wings are turning purple and pale;
The strength departs from her fingers frail;
"It is time to go," says she.

The neighbors all who helped her to rise
Look in her face with sorrowful eyes.
"I will come back again," she cries;
"Good by," says little Sweet Pea.

WHITE UNDERNEATH.

Into a city street
Narrow and noisome, chance had led my feet;
Poisonous to every sense; and the sun's rays
Loved not the unclean place.

It seemed that no pure thing
Its whiteness here would ever dare to bring;
Yet even into this dark place and low
God had sent down his snow.

Here, too, a little child
Played with the drifts now blackened and defiled,
And with his rosy hands, in earnest play,
Scraped the dark crust away,

Checking my hurried pace,
To note the busy hands and eager face,
I heard him laugh aloud in pure delight
That underneath, 'twas white.

Then through a broken pane
A woman's voice summoned him in again,
With softened mother tones, that half excused
The unclean words she used.

And as I lingered near
His baby accents fell upon my ear.
"See, I can make the snow again for you
All clean and white and new."

Ah, surely God knows best.
Our sight is short; faith trusts to him the rest.
Sometimes we know he gives to human hands
To work out his commands.

Perhaps he holds apart
By baby fingers, in that mother's heart,
One fair clean spot that yet shall spread and
grow,
Till all be white as snow.

MOTHERHOOD.

My thought goes back to that first Christmas day
When the young mother in the manger lay,
Weary and pale, but full of pride and joy,
While pressing to her side her baby boy.

Ah, sister Mary, time and place are strange,
But centuries bring the mother heart no change.
We know, to whom a child is given now,
Your thoughts, while gazing on that baby brow.

The hope that filled each Jewish woman's breast
In every mother's heart is still a guest;
That through this life a glorious light may shine
Lifting the world to levels more divine.

We know not how God's poets, prophets, come:
It may be one is here, within our home.
So reverently we guide the little feet,
And wait the first uncertain accents sweet.

We ponder in our hearts their sayings wise,
Reading between the lines with mother eyes.
We see the wise men gold and incense bring,
While in our hearts the heavenly angels sing.

O Mary, lying in your manger low,
The thoughts that filled your heart we also know.
Distance and time may make all else seem strange,
But mother love has never known a change.

SPRING SONG.

Behold, the winter is past;
He hurries over the hills,
His snowy garments dissolving fast
In a fringe of shining rills.
The waters glad and free
Clap their white hands for glee;
They leap up into the light at last;
For lo, the winter is past.

The rain is over and gone;
The blue sky bends above:
And gloriously the sun looks down
On garden, field, and grove.
Heavily fell the showers
Through the long clouded hours:
But every drop was a good seed sown;
The rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth,
Springing on every side;
After the winter creeping north
With summer's rising tide.

Each lovely shape and hue
A miracle ever new;
 Each bud a separate, wondrous birth:
 The flowers appear on the earth.

The time of the singing of birds
 Is come. Each flutters and sings
As if a joy that could find no words
 Lay under those restless wings.
Through every land and clime
 Each tree they find a home.
Each field a table spread. The time
 Of the singing of birds is come.

IN MY CASTLE.

I HAVE a castle in the air
Filled with many a vision fair;
But one bright chamber still is there,
 Warm, sunny, airy;
There oftenest my steps repair,
 There longest tarry.

For fairest in that fairy place
There is a form of childish grace,
A little smiling baby face
 My vision meeting;
She lifts herself to my embrace
 With eager greeting.

Two little rosy lips and sweet,
My own with loving kisses greet;
Two little restless, springing feet,
 Too young for roaming;
Two little beaming blue eyes greet
 The mother's coming.

And closely, with a loving arm,
I hold that precious baby form;
Her arms about my neck cling warm
With soft caressing;
Her every breath is like a balm,
Her touch a blessing.

Therefore, my castle rarely is
A scene of worldly luxuries;
Small place is there for wealth, or ease,
Or fame, it may be;
So filled is all my heart with this,
My sweet dream baby.

ROBIN.

Robin, on that tall elm-tree,
 Back and forth so gaily swinging,
Come, interpret unto me
 All that pleasant song you're singing.

Are you telling to your mate
 Business matters confidential,
That you stand so very straight
 And appear so consequential?

Even before the snow is gone,
 Or the crocuses are peeping,
Can it be you are so soon
 Laying plans for your housekeeping?

Let me whisper to you, bird,
 Inexperienced new-comer,
Let me tell you just a word
 Ere you lay your plans for summer.

But my word remained unsaid;
For, without a note of warning,
Quick he spread his wings and fled,
All my offered counsel scorning.

Through the sunshine warm and bright,
Brown and rosy flashed together,
As he vanished from my sight
In the pleasant April weather.

DWELLERS IN TENTS.

AWHILE on earth we roam,
In these frail houses which are not our home,
Journeying towards a refuge that is sure,
A rest secure.

Therefore we need not mourn
That sudden clouds across our skies are borne;
That winter chills us, and the storm makes rents
In our frail tents.

Therefore we need not fear,
Though moth and rust corrupt our treasure here;
Though midnight thieves creep in with silent stealth
To seize our wealth.

For, in our Father's house,
A mansion fair he has prepared for us;
And only till his voice has called us hence,
We dwell in tents.

IN THE MOONLIGHT.

THE quiet street, the elm-trees tall
With drooping boughs against the sky;
The newly fallen snowdrifts, all
Fade off before my eye.

And in their place the sky bends down
Over a plain of waters bright,
Where a little vessel all alone
Sails southward through the night.

And from her deck a face I know
Looks out across the moonlit sea;
While in the heart that beats below
There is a thought of me.

O little vessel, safe and swift
Be thy return across the sea.
May never an angry tempest lift
His hand to trouble thee.

FOUR VALENTINES.

To C. C. W.

I.

THERE is no sign of coming spring
In all the frosty air;
No budding snow-drop to the sun
Lifts up her forehead fair;
Yet will the merry birdlings sing
Their love songs, as of yore; —
I, too, must sing the same old song
Once more.

Perhaps the outward signs of spring
From us have passed away;
Perhaps faint wrinkles deck our brows,
Perhaps some hairs are gray;
Yet love within our hearts may sing
As gayly as of yore;
And I may be your valentine
Once more.

II.

Though time and distance part me from
Thy face, that I would gladly see,
And warn me that in future years
Diverging wide our paths may be;
Yet on this well-remembered day
Old feelings will resume their sway,
And once again my amorous lay
I pen to thee.

Not in the old time-honored style,
That suited well our youthful fancies;
Of cruel maid that will not smile,
And youth that pines beneath her glances;
In words less grand, but more sincere,
I mourn thy pleasant presence here,
And hours to memory still more dear
As time advances.

And while your pleasant path you walk,
Round which the flowers seem thickly set,
Let thoughts of days that are no more,
Like welcome friends, be kindly met.
The sunset walks, the mile-tree seat,
The seaside rocks we would not quit
Till the tide touched our lingering feet,
Forget not yet.

III.

If I were like a feathery bird,
 Across the sea I would fly,
And light on the hand of one I know, —
 But he would not know it was I.

I would sing him a song so strange and sweet,
 He would both smile and sigh,
With sudden thoughts of home in his mind, —
 But he would not know it was I.

IV.

A fancy seizes me
 For old times' sake,
To try if still my pen
 A rhyme can make.
Back flies Time's wheel to-night
 With sudden whirls,
Bringing again the days
 When we were girls.

Bringing again the old
 Elm-shaded street,
Down which we loved to walk
 With loitering feet;

The woods all radiant with
 September's gold,
Along whose shining paths
 We sometimes strolled.

Warm twilights when we watched
 The lazy tide
Come creeping up the rocks
 As daylight died;
Fire-lighted evenings when
 We two have sat
With books and needle-work
 And pleasant chat.

Pleasant in passing were
 Those girlhood days,
And pleasant still as seen
 Through memory's haze.
And though the long, long years
 Rise up between,
Though wide the continent
 May intervene,
We'll laugh at time and space,
 Old friend of mine,
And I will be once more
 Your valentine.

WHEN MY SHIP COMES IN.

All in the golden month of June,
When birds are singing their merriest tune,
When skies are brightest, and waves most blue,
And flowers are gayest with every hue,
And young leaves dance upon every tree,
Then my ship will come in from sea.

Then my ship will come in from sea
Richest of treasure bringing to me,
Not pleasant fruits from far-off lands,
Gathered and stored by dusky hands,
But something more sweet to my lips than these
My ship will bring me across the seas.

My ship will bring me across the seas
No silks and velvets the eye to please;
No misty laces fine to view,
Nor Indian shawls of brilliant hue,
But something that folds me more close, more warm,
My ship bears onward through calm and storm.

My ship bears onward through calm and storm
No jewel set in curious form;
But something I wear with more joy, more pride,
Than any gem the mountains can hide,
Or any pearl that is under the sea.
God bless her, and bring her back to me.

I thought to see her gliding up the bay,
With all her white sails set triumphantly;
My heart went out to meet her on the way
Up from the southern sea.

I will not mourn that she is safe from harm,
Though my eyes long her goodly form to see;
Safe from the hidden rock, safe from the storm
My good ship waits for me.

And back again upon this dangerous coast,
Though brave, and strong, and seaworthy was she,
Where ships are daily wrecked, and treasure lost,
I would not have her be.

Content with present poverty and pain;
For rich above all counting I shall be,
When my good ship and treasure I regain
Beyond the sea.

ORDINATION HYMN.

(Belfast, October, 1871.)

With faithful heart alway
To love and serve mankind;
To help the feet that went astray
The hidden path to find;

The light of things unseen
To blinded eyes reveal;
The hearts that men have called unclean
With reverent touch to heal—

Through pain and weariness
This path the Saviour trod;
Close in his footsteps must he press
Who, serving man, serves God.

Though small the victory won
In the world's narrow sight,
Yet shall his Master's word, "Well done,"
The servant's choice requite.

DEDICATION HYMN.

(Olympia, October, 1877.)

Father, we come to thee to-night
With grateful song, with prayer sincere,
Who hast made glad our toiling hands,
And crowned the labors of the year.

To thee we dedicate this house:
Here may thy presence rest unseen,
Here may thy still, small voice be heard
The labors of the weeks between.

And may we learn that service true
Not shut within these walls may be;
That who with generous, helping hand
His neighbor serves, is serving thee.

So may a house of God arise
In every heart that meets thee here;
Each deed a worthy sacrifice
And every thought a prayer sincere.

WALKING ON THE WATER.

Tossing at night upon a stormy sea.
What earthly help can now avail for thee?
How the frail boat on which thy hopes are cast
Shivers and trembles in the rising blast!

Lift up thine eyes. Behold, upon the wave
The Lord draws near thy trembling life to save:
He knows thy peril, though thy lips are dumb;
Across the watery waste he bids thee come.

Think not how high the angry waters rise;
Think not that men will gaze with wondering eyes;
Think not it is thine own exalted power
Upholds thy feet upon that treacherous floor.

But fix thine eyes upon that face divine:
Take the kind hand so gladly stretched for thine:
Let not thy clear faith waver, nor grow dim:
So on the water shalt thou walk to him.

OLD PROB'S DILEMMA.

Old Prob, one day, sat up in his shop,
Pouring his rain out, drop by drop,
Boiling, and freezing, and stirring it up
Into mist, and hail, and snow;
Bottling sunshine for winter use,
Tying up winds that were getting loose,
Sending out clouds, for a little cruise
Across the sky to go.

And when all things were arranged to his mind,
For a change of scene he felt inclined;
So, shutting his workshop door behind,
He descended the creaking stair,
And spoke to his housekeeper, down below
At her favorite window sitting to sew,
To have an eye on the shop, you know,
While he was taking the air.

"I've fixed the weather at 'cold and clear,'
And there's nothing for you to do, my dear,
But if any should call at the office here,
To say for a walk I'm gone."

Then with hands in his pockets he sallied forth,
Turning his steps to the frozen north,
"To visit his snug little farm, the earth,
And see how the crops came on."

Said the housekeeper then, in a musing way,
"Now I must begin without delay:
That dreadful shop for many a day
Has needed my broom and mop."
She quickly mounted the narrow stair
And looked about with a business air;
Cobwebs and dust were everywhere,
From floor to window top.

"Now the very first thing to do, no doubt,
Is to pull the furniture all about,
And dust every piece, inside and out;
And *here* I'll begin the job."
She turned to a corner where wide and tall
Stood a huge big bureau against the wall,
With many a drawer, and cupboard, and hole,
And many a brazen knob.

'Twas a piece of furniture known to fame;
But the woman had never heard its name.
At it she went, without awe or shame,
And pulled a knob of the bureau.
Out came a blast that chilled her nose;
The end of her mop in an icicle froze;

Frost on the window spreads and grows,
And the mercury drops to zero.

She touched another, and something white
Came out, like a flock of birds in flight;
She neither could see nor hear for fright,
As the snow grew thicker and deeper
She opened a drawer, and out there flew
All kinds of winds that ever blew:
"Oh, gracious me, what a hullabaloo!"
Cried poor Old Prob's housekeeper.

At last every door she opened wide,
Hoping for sunshine somewhere inside;
And then she suddenly turned to hide,
For she heard the master coming.
Out the window she jumped: she didn't care
If she never alighted, nor how, nor where;
While Prob stumped slowly up the stair,
"I'm called little Buttercup," humming.

But oh, the sight that met his eye!
He laid his cap and mittens by,
Stopped not to question how nor why,
Nor if, nor but, nor whether.
And he's busy yet, both day and night,
Making that bureau sound and tight;
For till he gets his shop set right
We can't have any weather.

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE WEATHER-COCKS.

My house stands high on the hill-top;
From its window looking down
I see, in the distance, mountains
With slopes of green and brown,
And, nearer, the homes and churches
And busy streets of the town.

And over the pleasant landscape
Whenever I cast my eye,
From distant domes and towers
And slender steeples high,
Twelve brightly gilded weather-cocks
Stand out against the sky.

Good friends they are, and faithful,
Whom I most dearly prize;
For the children of my neighbor,
They call me weather-wise,
And almost daily meet me
With eager, questioning eyes.

"Will it clear off to-morrow?"
Or, "Will it be fair to-day?"
They ask, when the morning's rosy,
Or the sunset sky is gray;
Then I turn to my chamber window
To see what the weather-cocks say.

One, on the tallest steeple,
Stands proudly at his ease,
Ever alert and watchful,
He faces the lightest breeze;
And the children and I have named him
"Old Probabilities."

One night — 'twas in September;
The moon was shining bright —
I rose from my bed at midnight,
For I could not sleep aright,
To gaze on the sleeping city
And the beauty of the night.

Such a sight I saw as never
Was witnessed before nor since;
There stood Old Probabilities
Perched on my garden fence,
And many gilded weather-cocks
From all parts flying thence!

On the ground alighted before him
Each strange and glittering bird;
I was so full of wonder
I neither spoke nor stirred.
And the rousing speech he made them
I heard it, every word.

"Friends," said the speaker, proudly,
"We are a noble race;
And men do well to give us
Their most exalted place;
Are not their rain and sunshine
Dependent on our grace?

"We turn to the north — the cold winds
Bring down the ice and snow;
To the south — the soft spring breezes
Make the waters melt and flow;
We bow to the west — the rain clouds
Fold up their tents and go.

"And do men therefore praise us?
Oh, friends, I speak with pain;
They call us weak and worthless,
Changeable, fickle, vain:
They make us a scorn and by-word;
You have heard it once and again.

"Therefore my wrath is kindled
Into a mighty flame:
Arise, ye noble weather-cocks
Who prize our ancient fame;
Rise, and we yet will show them
Deeds worthy of a name!

"Fly back to your domes and towers,
And firmly plant your feet;
Set your faces straight to the southward
Till the wind comes, strong and fleet;
Be firm, and the day is ours:
Farewell! Revenge is sweet!"

Then I heard their brazen pinions
Clash through the silent night;
But a cloud o'er the moon was passing,
And I did not see their flight.
Returning then to my pillow,
I slept till morning light.

In the morning the children met me
With — "*Now* what do you think?"
The weather-cocks stood out upon
A sky as black as ink.
I almost thought I could see them
Nod to each other and wink.

And before a word of answer
Had time to come from my mouth,
The trees were bending and swaying
With a sudden gust from the south;
Swifter it came, and stronger,
Till a great gale blew from the south.

The busy streets of the city
In a moment were empty quite;
From the fields ran the cattle for shelter,
All huddled together in fright;
And the birds flew into the forest,
Where it was dark as night.

Then came the clattering rain-drops,
Each heavy as a stone;
The blue floor of the harbor
All rough and black had grown,
And the vessels dragged their anchors
And toward the beach moved on.

The children watched from my window
As the leaves flew by in flocks.
"How the wind howls and whistles!"
They cried, "And the steeple rocks!"
But the sounds they heard were the shriekings
Of those jubilant weather-cocks.

MARGARET GERMAINE.

1671-1873.

Come, little Margaret, sit beside me here,
Where the warm firelight shines so bright and
clear,
While cold without the north wind whistles
drear
And piles the drifting snow;
And I will tell you now a story true
About a little girl you never knew,
Though she was called *Margaret Germaine*, like
you,
So many years ago.

Long, long ago, two hundred years before
Your eyes first opened on New England's shore,
A vessel small the winds and waters bore
From sunny France away;
And on the deck, beside her mother pale,
Holding with careful arms a baby frail,
A little maid stood 'neath the shadowing sail
One bright October day.

Were her eyes brown, or gray, or sunny blue?
Was the hair dark or golden in its hue,
That round her face the cool sea-breezes blew?
The story does not tell.
But brown or blue, those eyes were dim with tears,
Looking their last on home of childhood's years;
And the young heart was full of anxious fears;
This we may know full well.

Poor little Margaret, sad she well might be;
From cruel persecution forced to flee;
Borne by wild winds across a stormy sea,
From home and friends away.
But patiently the little maiden tried
With words of cheer her troubled heart to hide,
For the dear mother's sake, who at her side
Seemed drooping day by day.

And yet another grief fate held in store.
While scarce the perilous voyage was half way o'er,
Mother and baby passed to that strange shore
Across the sea of Death.
So near, and yet so far. And thus alone,
In these sad days from child to woman grown,
She landed on this western shore unknown,
And chill with winter's breath.

But one there was among that exile band
Who on the vessel's deck together stand,
Longingly gazing toward the bare gray land
Whose shore before them lies,
Who fain our Margaret's lonely heart would cheer,
Comfort her grief, dispel each gathering tear,
And read a lover's message, hope or fear,
In those sad downcast eyes.

The scanty record does not tell us whether
In fields of France these two had played together,
Ere storms had chilled their childhood's summer weather
And dimmed its sky of blue:
But little matters now; new friends or old,
Love's lesson soon they learned, love's story told;
And like a land of promise fair unrolled
A new world to their view.

So in the wilderness there bloomed a rose;
A new home, planted in New England snows,
Love warmed, hope lighted, held from threatening foes
With ever-watchful care.

For men and women in that early day
Must work and fight, no less than watch and pray.
Our little grandmother, her part to play,
Needs both to do and dare.

Time passed, with toils, and cares, and sober joys,
Bringing them gifts of rosy girls and boys,
To fill the cabin with their merry noise.
Amid the baby host,
Matron and mother now, though youthful still,
We see our Margaret rule with steady will
Her woman's kingdom; happier throne to fill
Than any queen can boast.

Almost a hundred years she lived to see;
Children's grandchildren gathered round her knee.
At last, with friendly hand Death set her free
From earthly care and pain,
While through the land the first low murmurs went
Of that slow-gathering storm of discontent
By which our land from England's grasp was rent,
A free, new life to gain.

This is her story — all the records show
Of "the French Grandmother" of long ago,"
Whose blood is in our veins, whose name we know,
Of daily life a part.
What if in some far, unknown time and place
We yet should see and greet her face to face!
Ah well, we do not know. She shall have place
Here, in our home and heart.

THE LAST WORD.

(March 12, 1888.)

"WILT thou be with me on the wedding day?"—
As if from heaven was the answer made;
The passing soul paused on its homeward way
To speak the solemn word, "*Be not afraid;*
Yes, surely, then and always." Fainting heart,
Take courage! Never again from him to part.
Let this last word thy comfort be, and stay
More sweet and sacred than the lover's kiss.
What holier vow could'st thou desire than this
To light with joy the golden wedding day?
The pure in heart the face of God shall see;
The pure in heart his still, small voice, shall hear.
It was God's message, spoken firm and clear,
As Death's kind hand his prisoned soul set free.

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